



**KEEP THE PROMISE COALITION**  
Community Solutions, Not Institutions!  
241 Main Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Hartford, CT 06106  
Phone: 860-882-0236; 1-800-215-3021, Fax: 860-882-0240  
E-Mail: [keepthepromise@namict.org](mailto:keepthepromise@namict.org), Website: [www.ctkeepthepromise.org](http://www.ctkeepthepromise.org)

**Testimony in front of the Judiciary Committee  
In Favor of SB 1125  
March 19, 2009**

**Good afternoon. My name is Cheri Bragg, Coordinator of the Keep the Promise Coalition. The Coalition was formed in 1999 after the closure of two large State psychiatric hospitals in response to the broken promise made to create and sustain a comprehensive, community mental health system for adults and children in CT.**

**The Coalition is in favor of SB 1125, An Act concerning the comprehensive revision of the Human Rights and Opportunities Statutes. This bill would comprehensively revise and reorganize the statutes related to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. We applaud this effort to prohibit discrimination within state contracting procedures against any person or group of persons because of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disability, mental retardation, learning disability or physical disability (first outlined in Section 3, subsection (a) of the bill).**

**Keep the Promise Coalition is naturally and especially concerned with discrimination because of present or past history of mental disability, a biologically-based brain disorder. The Coalition was formed after implementation of the Olmstead Decision in CT which required that people with mental illness be afforded the opportunity to live in the community. To that end, we believe that all people living with mental illness deserve the same opportunities in the community as everyone else without the added barrier of discrimination because of their disability. We feel these language changes are crucial to ensure a level playing field for the people and groups of people mentioned previously in regards to state contracting and urge passage of this bill.**

**Thank you for your time today. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have.**